



10 Copies of **MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME** to be won



It's been a while, but Max Rockatansky is back, mean, moody, and still rather mad. *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* is the third adventure of Miffed Mel, and you can win one of ten copies that we have to give away, thanks to the generous people at Warner Home Video. All you have to do is answer the questions

on the coupon below, send it to us at MAD MAX, VIDEO WORLD, THE NORTHERN AND SHELL BUILDING, PO BOX 381, MILL HARBOUR, LONDON E14 9TW before Friday, July 18th. The ten lucky folk pulled out of the Video World hat (a little pink number with a nice little mosaic motif sewn round the outside — we got it off

Bryce) will win a copy of the tape: answers and winners' names will appear in the September issue.

(The competition closes on July 18th, 1986 and usual rules apply. Employees of Video World and associated titles are not eligible.)

Send your entries to: MAD MAX, VIDEO WORLD, THE NORTHERN AND SHELL BUILDING, PO BOX 381, MILL HARBOUR, LONDON E14 9TW.

1. Who directed the first Mad Max film?
2. Name another film starring Mel Gibson
3. What hit single does Tina Turner sing at the end of the film?
4. What was the American title of the second film in the series?
5. Name two other Warner Video releases this year

NAME ADDRESS
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Hollywood's most famous
man-made man makes a
welcome return to our
screens in RCA/Columbia's
'The Bride'. Allan Bryce
traces the history of the
Frankenstein monster, who
turns out not to be a distant
cousin of Dave Ross after all . . .

FRANK



WHALE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

The Frankenstein monster, the screen's most famous walking corpse, was first brought to shambling life on the night of the 19th of June 1816, not by an evil scientist in a mad lab with lightning bolts crackling about and a hunchbacked assistant cackling away in the background, but by an imaginative nineteen-year-old girl in a quiet villa on the shores of Switzerland's Lake Geneva.

The inhabitants of the Villa Diodati that fateful night included the poets Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Byron's handsome young physician and secretary Dr John Polidori, as well as Shelley's child bride Mary. Bored by many long, rainy days in which they were unable to enjoy the pleasures of the Swiss countryside, and not yet being fortunate enough to be able to go out and rent some videos, the group decided to each write a ghost story with which they would entertain the others around the fireside. Despite the prodigious literary talents of the three men, it was Mary Woolstonecraft Shelley who came up with the most memorable. She wrote: 'When I placed my head upon my pillow, I did not sleep, nor could I be said to think. I saw — with shut eyes, but acute mental vision — I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion . . .'

Mary called her short story *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* and adapted it into a large three-volume novel in 1818 where it met with great success. It was to go on to become one of the most often reprinted books in the history of literature, inspiring many stage versions in the mid to late 1800s, and when the movies discovered it in the early 20th century they guaranteed the immortality of its three-syllable title terror for many generations to come.

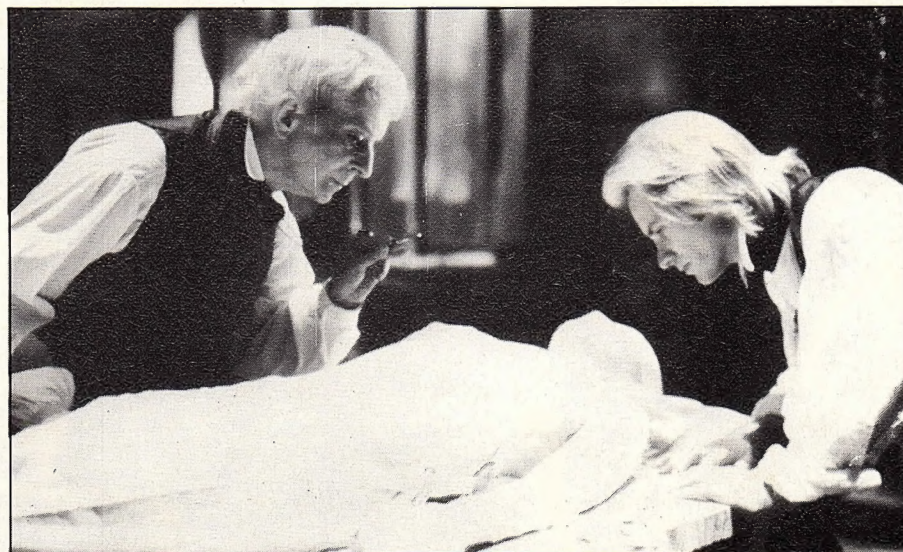
The first movie version of the Frankenstein story turned up in 1910 from the Edison company, where actor Charles Ogle played the monster as a shaggy-chested hunchback who looked more like Quasimodo from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He was created in a cauldron of blazing chemicals by a misguided scientist (again Ogle) and stalked

off into the darkness only to return on his creator's wedding night. What a spoilsport this monster was. Fortunately the power of love causes him to vanish before somebody suggests a kinky threesome.

Two more silent Frankenstein movies followed: *Life Without Soul* (1912) and the Italian *Mostro di Frankenstein* (1920), but it was the 1931 Universal pictures version that really brought the monster to box office life. Adapted from a stage play by Peggy Webling, the film came about because of the success of Universal's other horror opus *Dracula* (1931), and it was originally planned by director Robert Florey to cast the star of that movie, Bela Lugosi, as the Frankenstein monster. In the Mary Shelley novel the creature had been intelligent and charming at times, but when Lugosi learned that this would not be the case with the movie, and that his rich Hungarian accent would not be heard because his character would only be allowed to grunt and growl, he suddenly changed his mind about the role. The end result was that Lugosi and Florey went off to make *Murders In The Rue Morgue* (1932), while the film continued under the directional reins of Englishman James Whale, with his countryman William Henry Pratt playing the monster. Bill Pratt was to become a familiar face to horror film audiences under his stage name of Boris Karloff, and it was this movie that started him on his way to stardom.

Karloff was 44 years old when he got the part of the Frankenstein monster. The son of an official in the British Civil Service he had already failed to find much success in straight drama roles, and was about to chuck it all in when Whale spotted him in the studio canteen eating lunch. Realising this was a big break, Karloff accepted the part immediately, and willingly endured the daily four-hour sessions during which make-up artist Jack Pierce gave him the appearance of a walking corpse. Using mortician's wax and greasepaint, and dressing his victim in ill-fitting clothes to complete the illusion of somebody put together patchwork fashion, Pierce came up with what even today is regarded as the definitive Frankenstein monster. Karloff added the extra ingredient: the creature's soul.

Unable to speak even if he had wanted to, Karloff brought his character to life with his eyes, inspiring terror and pathos in equal measure. The film introduced us to him in an unforgettable fashion, with Whale cutting breathlessly from medium, to close-up, to extreme close-up, making the heavy-lidded, cadaverous face fill the screen. Its story had scientist Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) constructing a creature from dead bodies and then giving it life with jolts of electricity, upon which the monster runs loose through the countryside before meeting a fiery end in a burning windmill. For its time it was considered quite a shocker. So much so in



Quentin Crisp and Sting check out Mrs Monster.

fact that one scene was cut because it was felt to be overly brutal. This was the moment when the monster comes across a little girl at a lakeside, throwing daisies into the water. Attempting to imitate the motion he throws her in also. The censor was not amused.

The original *Frankenstein* (available on CIC) cost two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to make and has so far grossed over twelve million. At the time of its release poor old Boris wasn't considered 'important' enough to be invited to the movie's premiere, but as the fan mail poured in the studio bosses began to realise their mistake. By the time they got round to their second Frankenstein movie in 1935 Karloff was the number one horror superstar and they had to offer him a

hefty salary to once more put on the greasepaint and silly wardrobe.

The Bride of Frankenstein opened with the monster falling into a flooded cellar and escaping the burning windmill that climaxed the previous film. Elsa Lanchester, the wife of Charles Laughton, played the frizzy-haired female concocted this time around by Colin Clive's Baron who made her entrance in one of the most dazzlingly shot mad-lab sequences ever seen on film. To a riotous cacophony of wedding bells scored by top composer Franz Waxman, her bandaged figure strode jerkily across the laboratory to meet her mate. Not surprisingly this particular blind date didn't work out. It was more of a black comedy than a horror film — even Karloff himself felt it was a mis-

take to have the monster talk, laugh and enjoy a smoke — but genre buffs regard it as a classic and probably the best of the Universal series.

After this, audiences were offered Basil Rathbone as *The Son of Frankenstein* (1939), which marked Karloff's last appearance in monster guise. This movie was lampooned mercilessly in later years by comedian Mel Brooks, who had his hero Gene Wilder turn up, like Rathbone, to claim his father's castle inheritance. Rathbone stumbled through a few secret passageways and discovered Boris in a fur vest, while Gene Wilder, the Baron in *Young Frankenstein* (1974 — CBS Fox) found a book entitled 'How I Did It', by Baron Frankenstein, and created a suave, sophisticated man-about-town

Another monster is brought to life.



(Peter Boyle) who could do a mean version of 'Puttin' On The Ritz'.

Son Of was the last of the quality Universal Frankenstein movies. The world of the early 1940s had enough real-life horrors to contend with and when *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942) proved unsuccessful, the studio started teaming him up with other down-on-their-luck monsters. But neither *Frankenstein Meets The Wolfman* (1943) or *House of Frankenstein* (1945) revived the public's interest, and *Abbot and Costello Meet Frankenstein* was simply the kiss of death. Old Frankie retired from our screens in a far from graceful fashion.

Horror movies came back into fashion in the late 50s with the emergence of the drive-in craze in the States. Companies



The Art Ed checks out the new Video World cover.

like American International began churning out a host of teen-orientated low-budget chillers like *I Was A Teenage Frankenstein*, a confession made by handsome teenager Gary Conway, who is making out in his car when suddenly mad doctor Whit Bissell lops his bonce off. He wakes up with the body of a weight-lifter and a splitting headache. An amusing exploitation quickie, it looked marvellous alongside *Frankenstein's Daughter*, a poverty row 1957 cheapie about an unimaginative descendant of the Baron using drugs to turn a teenage girl into a buck-toothed terror.

At about the same time, an English company called Hammer films hit upon the idea of remaking some of the old horror classics in colour. Their first effort in this direction was *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) which, as scripted by Jimmy Sangster, followed Shelley's original story quite closely. The emphasis here was on the Baron himself, portrayed by distinguished stage and television actor Peter Cushing as a man of few scruples who was willing to commit murder if necessary to further his experiments. The monster role went to a virtual unknown named Christopher Lee, a former graduate of the Rank Charm School whose six foot six inch height made him ideal for the part.

Universal had agreed to let Hammer remake the original Frankenstein story, but they would not allow them to use the familiar Jack Pierce monster make-up. So Hammer's Phil Leakey had to create an entirely new design, making Lee up as a

horribly scarred creature with a beetle haircut and two different coloured eyes — clumsy of the Baron not to get a matching set! It was effective enough to get 50s audiences screaming in the aisles and set Hammer films off on the road to becoming one of Britain's most successful independent film companies.

As they really got into their stride, Hammer realised that in Cushing and Lee they had unwittingly created the new Karloff and Lugosi — superstars of the horror genre. Lee donned his *Dracula* cape and fangs and bowed out of the Frankenstein series after taking a tumble into a vat of acid at the end of *Curse*, but Cushing kept coming back for more. Whereas the old black and white Frankenstein pics had made a star out of the man who played the monster, the new technicolor terrors of Hammer were built around the exploits of the ruthless Baron. In each episode of the series the Baron would return to create some totally new monster — and audiences loved it.

At the end of *Curse*, we saw the Baron awaiting execution for his misdeeds. But the beginning of *Revenge of Frankenstein* saw the unfortunate priest giving him absolution going under the guillotine's blade instead, while Cushing escaped to turn a twisted dwarf (Michael Gwynne) into a demented cannibal — oh well, back to the drawing board . . .

In 1964 Universal agreed to let Hammer use their old Frankenstein make-up in exchange for releasing *The Evil Of Frankenstein*, but this wasn't a great success. Wrestler Kiwi Kingston, lumbered



around in hobnail boots as a square-headed, putty-faced clown, hardly posing much of a menace to anyone. The film tried to imitate the style of the old movies, with angry villagers putting the torch to Frankie's castle at the climax — but they should have done the same to the script before they started.

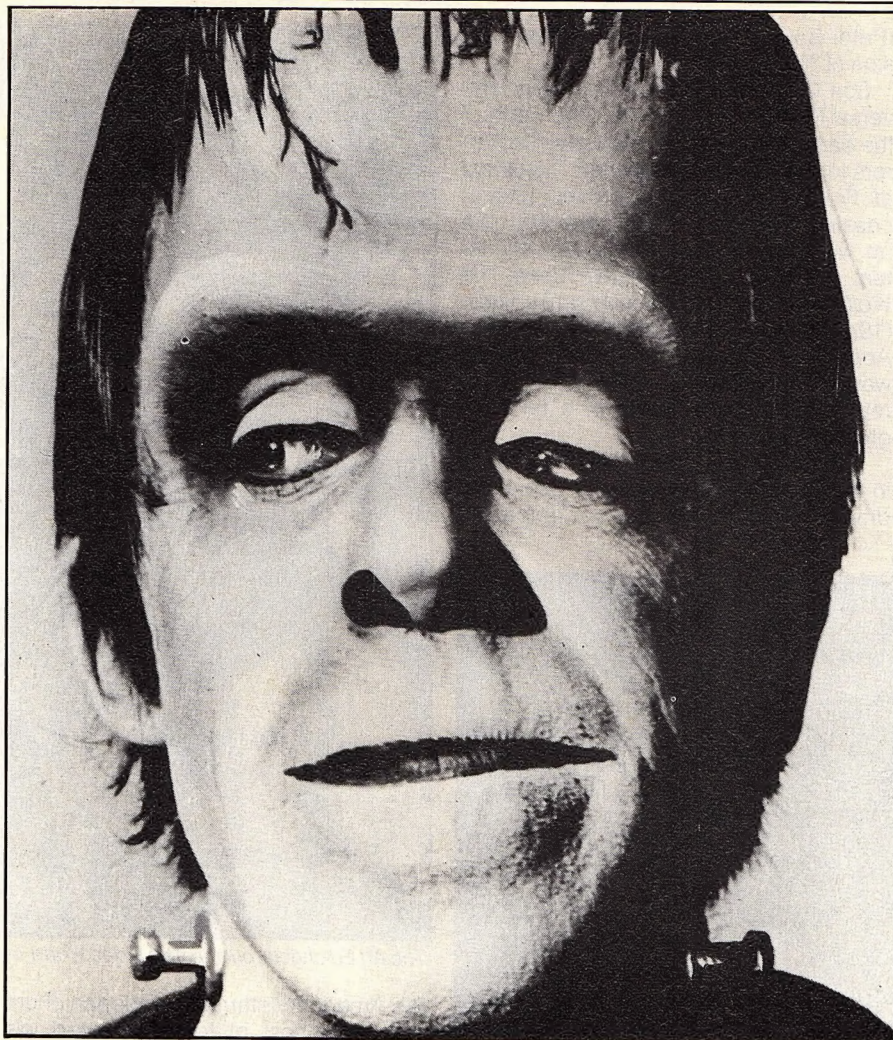
Frankenstein Created Woman (1967) had the bad Baron dabbling in soul transference and turning the scarred, disfigured Susan Denberg into a ravishing beauty. It was a nice job, but the operation had psychological complications — like she went bananas and started chopping people's heads off to carry around in a hat box! In real life Susan was a Playboy centrefold — and rarely wore a hat!

The series carried on with *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1962), in which we saw Cushing performing a brain transplant with the aid of a brace and bit. The unfortunate patient was a certain Dr Brandt (George Pravda), who burnt down the Baron's premises in a fit of pique at waking up looking like Freddie Jones. Things went much the same way in *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell*, which had Green Cross Man Dave Prowse dressed up like a hairy ape, supposedly created from spare parts of the inmates at an asylum where the Baron practices. Obviously the Baron had more practicing to do...

In a futile attempt to breathe some new life into the old Frankenstein formula Hammer tried a non-Cushing entry entitled *Horror of Frankenstein* (1970 — Thorn EMI) which starred the youthful Ralph Bates as an oversexed Baron who assembles his silly putty creation by numbers. Dave Prowse once more played the monster, lumbering about with the voluptuous Kate O'Mara in his arms at one point, only to be asked by Bates: 'And what on earth are you thinking of doing with her?' (Answers on a postcard to Video World). But though it had its bright moments the movie didn't work as a whole, probably because the originals were so close to parody to begin with.

Hammer's mannered frights seemed rather tame alongside the big budget horror movies of the 70s and certainly didn't match up to the shock value of *Andy Warhol's Frankenstein* (1974), an ultra-sick exercise in exploitation which even today is on the video banned list in this country. Shot in eye-popping 3D it has nutty Baron Udo Kier telling his eager assistant that 'To know death you must first f*** life into the gall bladder!' I won't go into the details of what he does next, but when he's not engaging in sexual perversion, the dear chap is travelling the countryside snipping heads off with garden shears. He ends up speared on a pole with his liver dangling out over the audience (a wonderful sight in 3D) and delivering a soliloquy on the nature of life.

Also in 1974, audiences were treated to what may be the definitive version of Shelley's novel. Noted author Christopher Isherwood helped script the epic *Frankenstein: The True Story*, which cast



Great feature Allan, but what about...

Leonard (*Romeo and Juliet*) Whiting as the dedicated Dr Frankenstein who gives life to an intelligent creature (Michael Sarrazin) and then is shocked to see him begin to rot away in front of his eyes. Under the spell of the diabolical Dr Polidori, Frankenstein then creates a mate in the seductive shape of Jane Seymour. The monster gets annoyed, rips Jane's head off (the stitchwork was poor anyway) and pursues Frankenstein and Polidori to the frozen wastes of the North Pole where he gets his revenge. Expertly acted by a fine cast (which also included Nicola Paget, Sir John Gielgud, Margaret Leighton, Tom Baker, Michael Wilding and Sir Ralph Richardson) this four hour long production remains possibly the ultimate Frankenstein picture.

It has now been over a decade since the Frankenstein monster last lumbered across the screen in a new movie, but it's common knowledge that you can't keep a good monster down, and now big Frankie is back in full colour and hi-fi stereo sound in *The Bride*, a big budget Hollywood reworking of many of the elements of Mary Shelley's classic. This is no cheap and nasty frightener, but rather a gothic romance between two people who were literally made for each other.

The opening scenes of Franc (*Quadrophenia*) Roddam's movie are lifted directly from the 1935 *Bride of Frankenstein*, with crackling thunderbolts bringing a delicate female figure to jerky life.

The monster steps out of the shadows and tries to claim his bride, but she screams at him. Jilted he lashes out, hits the wrong switch and, KAPOW! — the whole kaboodle goes up in a spectacular explosion. In the new version the Bride is played by Jennifer Beals (of *Flashdance*) as a most liberated lady, while the monster is newcomer Clancy Brown. The third survivor of the lab blast is of course the Baron himself, played here by Policeman Sting. The narrative then develops that the monster goes off on the road in search of adventure while the Baron goes back to his spare castle to try and teach his new creation a few things about other ways of creating life.

The film keeps getting bogged down in the burgeoning relationship between Sting and his lady friend, but it really comes to life when we are out and about in the Transylvanian countryside with the monster and the dwarf (David Rappaport) he befriends. In Clancy Brown's perceptive performance we can see some of the true appeal of the Frankenstein monster — that magical ingredient that keeps bringing him back from the grave when other monsters have long since turned in their licences to chill. It is the fact that underneath that terrifying exterior that is misunderstood and despised by many there lurks a human being just like you or I. We should not be too quick to judge others by appearances alone. Mind you, I don't think I'd like to meet him on a dark night.